

Demagorgon and Truth, by Will Byers by Gazyrlezon

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Summary:

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Demagorgon and Truth, by Will Byers

“That’s it for today, I think,” Scott Clarke concluded his teaching for the day. He was barely halfway through the sentence when the first student had reached the door.

There were, he’d observed over the years, three types of students: there were those who hurried away after lessons, as if a curse had lifted from their lives. There were those who needed a little longer before waking up and before running after the others.

And then there were those who were neither, because they did not actually want to get away. Those who sometimes stayed for half a minute, not because they’d been sleeping but because they had a question that warranted an answer.

In this class there were four of those, to varying degrees. Dustin Henderson, of course, of whom Mr. Clarke would be surprised if he didn’t, at least, got a Doctor of Science degree somewhere further along the road. Mike Wheeler, maybe not as much of a theorist but the guy who actually built the science fair projects. Lucas Sinclair, somewhere in the middle of both. Quite probably the best when it came to logical thinking. And Will Byers, who held the others together.

Except that for almost a year now, it looked to be as much the others holding their friend together as he held them. Suddenly, Will Byers had become as likely to fall asleep during class as students of type II, but for a different reason, it seemed. Suddenly he sometimes had to leave in the middle of class, for special medical checks and treatments.

Sometimes Scott worried about the boy. But there wasn’t much that he could’ve done, not outright; and though he had not met her often, he struggled to think of a mother better at her job than Joyce Byers was. He did his best to keep the bullies off the boy and his friends, of course, but beyond that he tried to keep back.

Not that this kept him from returning Dustin’s winking goodbye, or from wishing the group a nice afternoon. Only when they were

already out the door did he remember that he'd planned to talk an earnest word with the boy about how to address his teacher. Really, but this whole *my-lord* thing was getting out of hand. Not that he didn't think it funny, but ever since Mrs. Andros had overheard that once ... he really should do something about it, he knew, but he kept forgetting it when he actually had the chance.

Well, too late now. He packed his things together, cleaned the blackboard, and counted the remaining bits of white chalk. He'd have to remember getting new ones tomorrow, these short stubs were a pain to write with, honestly.

He was just about to take his bag and leave the room when he noticed the sheet of paper still lying on Will Byer's desk. For a moment he considered leaving it there, so the boy could just pick it up tomorrow, before remembering that Will wasn't usually the earliest in the room. He walked up to the desk and took a closer look.

The paper might look blank from this side, but he could make out the shadow of writing on the other side of it easily enough. And depending on what it said there, leaving this here might not be too good an idea. Not everyone in this class was Will's friend, and some of those who weren't usually showed up early.

It still felt mildly wrong to take it with him, but Scott told himself he'd just return it first thing in the morning the next day as he put it to his own notebooks into his bag, careful not to read as much as a single word.

When he arrived home he'd completely forgotten the thing. Except it'd come out on top of the stack when he'd grabbed in the bag to get the stash of homework he still had to grade. Worse, he'd already applied his red pen and written *title/exercise number and name missing!* on it before realizing that it was not, in fact, anyone's homework assignment. Still not really understanding, he read the first line: *The Demagorgon is the truth.*

And before he knew it, he was reading the whole thing:

The Demagorgon is the truth.

I was afraid, and that is the truth.

I am still afraid, and that, too, is the truth.

The Demagorgon is the truth, and that has neither rhyme nor reason to it.

The Party is the truth.

I was away, and that is the truth as well.

The Party searched for me, and that is the truth.
They didn't find me.

In truth, they stumbled into something else.

They found the right thing, and that is the truth.

But I was alone and gone and afraid, and that, too, is the truth.

Sometimes I feel like I am still alone. That is the truth, and that has neither rhyme nor reason.

The other side is the truth.

Coldness and corruption and monsters are the truth, there.

Death is the truth.

There.

(and here)

Yet I still live, and that has neither rhyme nor reason to it.

I came back. That is not the truth.

I was brought back. That fits it closer.

I was dragged back, unable and too weak to help me myself. That is the truth.

They say I came back, but that has neither rhyme nor reason.

The Mind-Flayer is the truth.

Bob Newby's newly dead, and that is the truth.

The Superhero's gone, and the club orphaned, and that is the truth.

The Party is still there, and that, too, is the truth.

Mike is the truth.

El is well, and they are a pair, and that is the truth as well.

I am not a part of them.

I do not live, yet am alive. That is the truth, and that has neither rhyme nor reason to it.

The Mind-Flayer is the truth, and the monsters are real.

That is the truth.

Finally, the Party is truth as well.

The Demagorgon *was* the truth, as was the shadow monster.

(Mr. Clarke blinked. The "was" was written in red, and five times underlined)

The Party is the truth.

I am a part of the Party, and that is true.

And, finally, this *has* rhyme and reason to it.

He returned the sheet to its author the next day, who made him promise not to tell anyone.

Mr. Clarke promised.

Author's Note:

Obviously rather heavily influenced by Jake Chamber's essay in *The Dark Tower*. Not really sure how it turned out, but I wanted to write something like this for ages. The thing with Mr. Clarke came later, and was actually supposed to be a little shorter ... it sort of got out of hand, really.

Hope you liked reading it!